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Punch

BANK



Shell guide to trees in APRIL

PAINTED BY S. R. BADMIN, R.W.S.

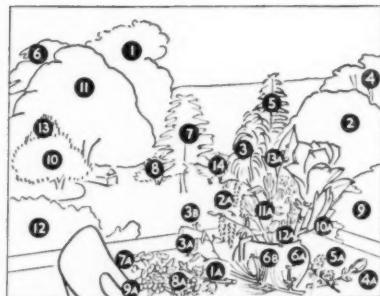


The ASH (1, 1A) opens its black buds before the leaves appear. Neat and fine-twigg'd, the scarce HORNBEAM (2, 2A) produces leaf and catkin together. SILVER BIRCHES (3) dangle male catkins (3A), female catkins standing upright (3B). Buds on SYCAMORE unfold (4, 4A), rosy female cones ornament the LARCH (5, 5A), SCOTS PINE (6) will soon open female (6A) and more conspicuous male (6B) flowers.

In gardens the PEAR is like snow (7, 7A), ornamental CRAB APPLES blossom (8, 9, 8A, 9A), and MAGNOLIA swanks with its great flowers of pink-tinted ivory (10, 10A). Our garden Magnolia is a hybrid between two kinds from China, where poets called Magnolia "How Do You Do to the Spring".

Sticky buds on the HORSE CHESTNUT (11, 11A) won't release their flowers till May. Life stirs in the twisty JUDAS TREE, gallows of Judas (12), though it will be late May before the flowers (12A) open along twig and trunk—flowers edible in salad or pancakes. The poet's SWEET BAY has modest flowers and dark aromatic evergreen foliage (13, 13A). JAPANESE CHERRIES (14) show some early colour.

April memo: soak Horse Chestnut buds and twigs in water. Shine a torch through the water and it will glow with blue luminescence.



Shell's series of monthly "NATURE STUDIES: Fossils, Insects and Reptiles", which gave so many people pleasure last year, is published in book form by Phoenix House Ltd. at 7s. The Shell Guide to "Flowers of the Countryside" and Shell's "NATURE STUDIES: Birds and Beasts" are also available at 7s. each. On sale at bookshops and bookstalls.

You can be sure of



The Key to the Countryside



FOR a magical moment prospects improved, but by the time the *Daily Mail* had overbalanced itself with the sensational main news headline "Everything Is Just Fine," the optimism market had slumped again, with polio scares, mass deportations in Bulgaria, Russia browbeating Norway, lost British man-hours running into eight figures, Mr. Nehru pictured arm-in-arm with Mr. Bevan, more trouble over Kashmir, the unification of Germany receding fast, Nasser bagging the Canal, arrangements eagerly pressed forward for the Pacific explosions, Albania gibing at Yugoslavia, shocking scandals in Switzerland and reports of glass in school milk. All in all, it was a pleasure to turn from all this to those broad, self-satisfied smiles on the faces of the Bermuda statesmen.

Missing Something

AT a loss for really telling propaganda against the increased consumption of tranquillizers, government health spokesmen in America did their best last week with the statement: "It is good for the human race to be subject to worry, anxiety and dissatisfaction." While



this may just conceivably deter people who aren't yet in the grip of the habit it is said to have worried the addicts into stepping up the dose.

Wringing Grooves of Change

PEOPLE in West Germany, if a proposed road safety law goes through, will have to leave their cars at level crossings and put their ears to the rail. One or two people in this country have

already been observed doing this, but it is understood that they are only listening for the approaching rush of wage claims.

No Passengers

LISTENERS to the Third Programme who are banding together in its defence have formed a committee of twenty-eight. It is thought that the annual



general meeting will derive an appropriately original flavour from having a completely empty hall and a completely full platform.

Honourable Settlement

SIR JOHN HAY's announcement that his Linggi rubber plantation has paid two hundred per cent in dividends during the past seven years, in spite of having been wrecked by Japanese soldiers in 1945, drew general applause from British industrialists. Naturally a captious few thought that Sir John was lucky to have only the Japanese Imperial Army to contend with. Trade unionists, stung by that two hundred per cent, would have come back and wrecked it again.

Glamour All the Way

ADVANCE publicity for the impressively named "Festival of Films in the Service of Industry," to be held at Harrogate in October, is already beginning to flow. Film-fans noting that nineteen bodies are represented on the Festival Council (from the Incorporated Sales Managers' Association to the Mayor and Corporation of Harrogate),

that a committee of twelve will handle the organizing side, and that the nineteen celebrated names on the Council, led by Lord Godber, include another peer and eight knights, will realize, perhaps for the first time, what it must take to organize those other festivals they keep having at Venice and Cannes.

Folly to be Wise

MR. LU TING-YI, propaganda chief of the Chinese Communist Party, reports that since the Party's last ideological rectification campaign in 1942 eleven million members had admitted that they "did not really understand Marxism-Leninism." There is no need for Mr. Lu to worry, of course, until this figure gets a lot less.

One of Ours . . . One of Theirs . . .

PUBLIC disquiet over things that go bump in the night has been somewhat abated by Canada's General Hatton, who declares that our scientists are perfecting devices which will turn attacking rockets round in mid-air and



send them back where they came from. Even the chance that the attackers will have a device to turn them round after they've been turned round doesn't really dismay, provided both sides can keep it up.

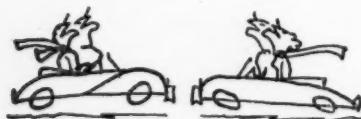
Night Shift

LAST week's reports of a new surveying instrument which will revolutionize civil engineering and construction work by enabling accurate measurements to be

taken even during darkness are said to have been received with particular enthusiasm by Lord Citrine. The invention will be invaluable for Central Electricity Authority men putting up pylons.

People Don't Think

MOTORING organizations are said to have been dismayed over reports that



large numbers of cars have been parked bumper-to-bumper at the scene of the Viscount air crash, while owners picnicked and waited "for something to happen." They feel that this is no way to behave during a petrol shortage.

Surprise, Surprise

AMONG the latest cold-war weapons is the electronic device recently unveiled at Ann Arbor, Michigan, which "automatically translates Russian scientific papers into English." One of its early triumphs is expected to be the automatic translation into English of a Russian scientific paper about an electronic device at Ann Arbor, Michigan, which automatically translates Russian scientific papers into English.

O.K. for Take-off

DELAYS in going ahead with the 750-foot television mast at St. Hilary Down, Glamorgan, have now ended, permission having been granted by the Minister of Housing after conscientious examination of suggestions that aircraft using Cardiff Airport might collide with it. South Wales viewers are naturally relieved on two counts: that I.T.A. programmes are to reach them at last, and that there is no risk of their being continually interrupted by irritating breaks in transmission.

Cyprus

THE dead will not attend the victory-feast

When Grivas and Makarios go free,
Is it not passing fair to be a—priest
And ride in triumph through
democracy?

THE SACRED BUDGET

A FEW irreverent words about the Budget, the great Occasion of the Parliamentary year. It can now be revealed that it is the biggest bore. The new Member rises at dawn on Budget Day, hurries to Westminster, and reserves a seat. He seldom does it again. The bore has diminished, it is true, in volume. Mr. Gladstone, in 1860, "spoke from four to nine"—five hours for a piffling Budget of £50,000,000. Sir John Simon, in 1938, got rid of more than £900,000,000 in less than ninety minutes. To-day the Chancellor deals with £4,000,000,000 in about two hours—and the speech, by the way, has to be artificially extended because the Stock Exchange mustn't know about the new taxes before it closes. The Budget to-day is surrounded with as much mumbo-jumbo stuff as the eating of a missionary. Apart from tax announcements (which take little time) the only interest in the speech is theatrical—will the Chancellor give a good show? Will he faint, take water or whisky? When he has done, there can be no real debate, for no one can digest so much so soon, and only a few private Members let off their favourite squibs. A whole Parliamentary day has been wasted on a solo turn.

If sense prevailed, the "Financial Statement" would be printed as a White Paper, and "released," or let loose, at five o'clock when the Stock Exchange are safe in their clubs. But that, of course, would diminish the importance of the *prima donna*.

The sad fact is that Parliament has forgotten the nature of the occasion. The Crown is asking the Commons to provide money—"to consider and vote the taxes necessary for the supplies of the year." In the good old days the faithful Commons answered now and then "Hey! Hey! Grievances before Supply!" That great cry is heard no more. But technically still, as the O.E.D. shrewdly observes, the Chancellor is "submitting" his proposals "for the approval of the House of Commons."

Who would imagine that from the speeches? They are one long Diktat, all about "I"—though the words "I propose" slip in now and then:

"I must get a proper contribution from the direct taxpayer by other means."—Sir John Simon

"I cannot leave the surtax rates unaltered this year . . ."

Sir John Simon

"I propose to amend the law regarding payments made to charities . . ."

Dr. Dalton

"I have made increases of £30 million in direct taxation . . . I have made no remission. I thought it my duty to make none."

Mr. Harold Macmillan

"If it were an easier time and I found it possible to distribute more revenue by way of tax reduction . . ."

Dr. Dalton

"This repeal will cost me nothing this year . . ."—Dr. Dalton

ME!

And, alas, they are right. It is the great "I" who does these things. Do the Commons rise up and cry "We vote the taxes, not you!" They do not. More than half of them may put their names to a motion for the abolition of some tiny tax. What happens? The sovereign Treasury commands, the High Priest dances, the Whips crack, and the Members split. They even vote against a motion they have moved or seconded. "The Government must not be defeated on the Finance Bill." Why not? "The Sovereign Parliament" would exist again.

A. P. H.





"If you please, ma'am, it was a very little one."—Midshipman Easy

Mad about Montage

By DAVID YATES MASON

"GARBO'S first words? You can't have forgotten?" said the Uncle.

"I know the film was *Anna Christie*," the Nephew replied, "but it was before I was born. Long before."

"As it happens," said the Uncle, "I was in the front of the queue for the first performance."

"I was sure you'd be able to help," the Nephew said. "It's one of the questions in our Film Group Quiz."

"It seems only last week," the Uncle continued reminiscently. "The opening shots of the New York waterfront . . . Manhattan Bridge shrouded in studio fog—so significantly fogger than the

real thing . . . the mournful hooting of the tugs . . . Then, after an interminable scene in a low dock-side dive with two old character actors character-acting like mad, the door slowly opened and she appeared . . ."

The Nephew was deep in his quiz. "I wonder if you could help with this one," he said. "What are the better-known names of Miss Goodman, Miss Gustafsson and Miss Gumm?"

"Theda Bara, Garbo and Judy Garland," replied the Uncle without a second's hesitation. "Incidentally, actresses' *noms de cinéma* are quite a study in themselves. If there isn't already a long and humourless thesis

on the subject someone will very soon start one. Probably on a Fulbright grant."

"Can you tell me," said the Nephew, at his quiz again, "where one can see Jean Hersholt, Chester Conklin and Zasu Pitts together?"

"In von Stroheim's *Greed*, of course. Actually I'm one of the very few people who have seen the original tinted version with all the gold teeth, gilt frames and bed-knobs done in gold on the black-and-white print. It lasted for five hours—real Film Society stuff."

"When I saw it," said the Nephew, "it can't have been more than a dozen reels."

"Your generation are pampered," said the Uncle, "with your edited excerpts in your State-aided National Film Theatre, 'Sight and Sound,' Miss Iris Barry, Dr. Roger Manvell and all. You don't have to go searching out *The Battleship Potemkin* in a flea-pit cinema in the docks. Hints from Miss Lejeune don't send you chasing vintage Lya de Putti down the back streets of Hammersmith. You don't have to trail out, as we did in the old Film Society days, on winter Sunday afternoons, forsaking sleep and the *Sunday Times*, to see Pudovkin's *Mother*."

"I saw *Potemkin* on television," said the Nephew.

"So did I," said the Uncle, "and what a sad disappointment the poor old thing turned out to be."

"It looks/ corny now," the Nephew said, "but then, of course, it is more than thirty years old."

"That wouldn't matter," said the Uncle, "if only one could come to it suitably prepared. How can one expect to appreciate an urgent social-message film like *Potemkin* if one is lolling back in the foam-pillowed, transverse-sprung comforts of home with Miss Edana Romney just a knob's-turn away? When I first saw it I had had to lie my way out of watching the school first fifteen (they were due to make mince-meat of the Old Pontificals that afternoon); had made an endless journey across London by open-top bus, trams and steam trains on Betjeman branch lines; had become hopelessly lost in wettest West Ham, to achieve at last the haven of a hard ninepenny at the Elite



"I'm not worried—we don't listen to Luxembourg no more since the commercial telly started."

Kinema—it was housed in a derelict bethel—just as the credit titles of the masterpiece jerked on to the screen."

"But why did you have to go so far?" the Nephew asked.

"In those Zinoviev-letter days," the Uncle explained, "Russian films had something of a black-market air about them. They were banned practically everywhere and could only be found in the remoter built-up areas. So you can imagine how thrilling it all was. The opening shots of the battleship with its brave crew brutally treated by their bespectacled Czarist officers while in the orchestra pit the pianist thundered out "The Volga Boatman" on an insecure upright, found me in a mood of total acceptance. By the time we reached the actual mutiny (heralded by the subtitle 'The Men Refuse To Eat Their Bortsch') I was in a dedicated daze that lasted right through the climax of the famous Odessa Steps massacre sequence and all the way out into the chilly dusk and back to school, my brain flushed with montage, crowd movements, cross-cutting and proletarian fervour. After that the vivid re-enactment by my friends of Pringle's ripping forward movement in the second half fell rather flat."

"It really is a question of creating the right sense of occasion," the Nephew observed.

"Of course," the Uncle went on, "there was a price to be paid. Having devoted all my formative years and most of my pocket money to the filmic masterpieces from *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance* through *Caligari* to Dreyer's *Passion de Jeanne d'Arc* and every reel of early Ufa, I became, it must be admitted, a little bit smug—like a boy who has received Confirmation."

"But surely the Chaplin comedies acted as an antidote?"

"No," replied the Uncle. "In my uncompromising adolescence I refused to see them—and, if I did happen to do so, refused to laugh. Nothing jollier for me than *The Joyless Street* and documentaries about town planning."

"But you aren't like that now," said the Nephew.

"No, indeed," the Uncle replied. "I very seldom go to the cinema and then only to the flashiest musicals—armies of chorus girls, huge production numbers on the hugest possible screens,

blinding colour, deafening bands in full stereophonic sound."

"You must have changed very suddenly."

"Cheerfulness simply had to break in," the Uncle said. "All at once I found myself blasting and inescapably bored with seeing gaunt foreign women doing gaunt foreign things from the most unattractive angles."

"Incidentally," said the Nephew, "what were Garbo's first words?"

"They were unforgettable," the Uncle replied, "though I did not appreciate their full significance until much later. She sailed through that door and said, very simply, 'Gif me a visky'."



"Scab!"

Campbellshanks the Railway Cat

THERE's a whisper down the line at 11.39
 When the Night Mail's ready to depart,
 Saying "Campbell where is Campbell has he gone off on a ramble?
 We must find him or a strike will start."
 All the ticket clerks and porters in the most unlikely quarters
 They are searching high and low,
 Saying, "Campbell where is Campbell for unless he wins this gamble
 Then the Night Mail just can't go;
 We shall never be content with a rise of three per cent,
 On that we will not yield an inch of ground!"
 Then Campbellshanks appears and amid three hearty cheers
 Says he's settled for a shilling in the pound.

He gives one flash of his glass-green eyes
 And the signal goes "All Clear!"
 And he's off once more to his native shore
 In the Northern Hemisphere.

You may say that by and large it is Campbell who's in charge
 Of the British railway system;
 That it's he and not Sir Brian who controls the Road of Iron
 Is a point that can scarcely have missed him.
 Though the office staff may stay in the proud T.S.S.A.,
 Though the firemen may complain of differentials,
 Though the drivers are not deaf to the A.S.L.E.F.,
 All are solidly united on essentials
 With the cleaners, dining-car men and the other N.U.R. men
 And they certainly would never approve
 Of fratricidal riot, so they all keep very quiet
 When Campbell is about and on the move.

You can play no pranks with Campbellshanks!
 He's a Cat that was born to reign.
 You will meet him without fail when there's trouble on the rail—
 The Cat of the Railway Train. E. V. MILNER

The Fringe of Thought

By PETER DICKINSON

IN an age in which the abstract speculations of a Swiss patent examiner can result, eventually, in atomic explosions, it is disturbing to note distinct signs of decadence in a similar field, that in which pure mathematics begins to make contact with what we like to think of as reality. My observations on this subject have been less than fragmentary; like many similar discoveries they were occasioned by the activities of a colleague who had no intention of doing anything of the sort.

He was sitting in a deep armchair and reading out in a controlled monotone bits of a general knowledge paper. His daughter is still in the grip of education. "What is a sine wave," he muttered, "does ontogeny repeat phylogeny how many stars in a galaxy what is osmosis how many edges has a regular rhomboid triakontahedron what is a Möbius strip?"

His voice changed. "Ah," he said, "I know that. You twist a bit of brown paper, glue its ends together, cut it down the middle and it doesn't do what you thought."

At first all I could think of was that we had to construct regular *eikosahedra*; I remembered the mixed odours of glue and desperate boy, and an old maths master with chalk-dust spilling out of his turn-ups shuffling between desks that had long been haggard with ink-runs. Black-out screens were propped against a cupboard, but the enormous mullions in the windows censored the daylight fairly thoroughly, making it necessary to draw lines too thick to be accurate so as to be able to see them at all. Suddenly I remembered an easier afternoon when we were given strips of glued paper, told to twist them, stick the ends together and cut them down

the middle. One twist produced a tortured circlet, two a two-link paper-chain. We were treading, all heedless and wondering how this would get us through our maths papers, in the steps of Möbius.

My colleague checked his answers, but the echoes of his phrasing flicked my memory sideways to another branch of the educational forest. When my brother was reading philosophy in order to read theology in order to take Holy Orders, he had sent me a postcard saying "I am exercised to know what shaped object would result if one were to turn the inner tube of a bicycle tyre inside out through the valve. The answer is not what one thinks, and the more one thinks about it the more this is true. Yours affctly."

Partly because there seemed to be a connection somewhere and partly because I felt that a man capable of giving his name to a strip of brown paper might be worth a larger corner of my mind than that single fact, I looked up Möbius in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, but what I already knew about him was all that they had cared to record. He had no entry to himself but was reasonably well spoken of under Manifolds, which turned out to be a column and a half of higher mathematics. I read it. Meaning gleamed like faint moonlight between passing clouds of equations. The activities of Möbius were fairly clear and then all was blackness. I was about to give up when there was a sudden gap between two cumulus masses of algebra and the writer could be plainly observed saying

"A model of the most general, orientable, two-dimensional manifold M may be obtained by making a target out of a spherical block and shooting a suitable number of bullet-holes clean through the block."

Darkness again at once, and through it he stated casually that "the evaluation of $\int \Phi(x,y)dx$ leads to the theory of elliptic functions and so on." There was not another gleam.

The rare mathematicians who use laboratories are not likely to have had them made bullet-proof. Besides, if the writer was suggesting laboratory work, drilling holes would have been more sensible; it could have been left to the lab boy. I am intuitively sure



that the passage must be either auto-biographical or fictional. One would like to think it was the former; the mind's eye is only too ready with a picture of a small, round man wearing brown plus-fours and lying on his stomach on a formal terrace. The crack of his .22 punctuates the pollen-laden afternoon as he fires steadily at a croquet ball at the far end of the lawn, while beyond a clipped yew hedge his gaunt assistant takes a duelling pistol to the wooden ball, painted to look like stone, that stands on top of the gate-post at the entrance to the coach-yard. In vain, for neither's weapon has sufficient penetrating power to send a single bullet *clean through the block*.

This, and the cookery-book vagueness of the phrase "a suitable number of holes," inclines me to think that the passage is the product of a surd-fevered fancy. In this case my observations are complete: Möbius's strip was a piece of realistic invention, restrained but not uninteresting; if it had been a cathedral it would have been recorded as "good classical." The writer in the *Britannica* has allowed his scientific detachment to become dangerously infected by the technique of the romantic thriller, by now an occupational disease among dons. But at least the thing is possible, whereas the Tutor in Philosophy who set my brother to speculate on the properties of inner tubes never managed to heave his imagination out of the subjunctive.

This small process of artistic degeneracy may seem no more than an unimportant symptom in a civilization already obviously on the crumble, but those who believe that only Science can get us out of the mess it has got us into should reflect that Einstein did his work to the sane accompaniment of brown paper strips being twisted and glued together all over the world. Admittedly this still goes on in a small way, but how are the men who ought to be buttressing the world against disaster, by transforming thought into energy or something, to have any chance if most of them are busy about a problem which any garage-hand could have told them was hopeless from the start?



"Rolls-Royce Wraith required; chassis must be first-class; body immaterial . . ." *Advertisement in The Times*

Obviously.



Seismogram

WITH regard to the rather unusual number of earthquakes Shrugged off by the Press in dispatches of two or three lines, I suppose it's no wonder no pundit has so far suggested They're signs?

No doubt to interpret as symbols of cosmic impatience
A series of shocks in the rocks on the bed of the sea
Would expose any pundit to scorn, which is why they've all left it

To me.

J. B. BOOTHROYD

Cockburn's Aspects of English History

The Trend



ACCORDING to G. M. Trevelyan on page 96 of his *English Social History*, "all that one can say is that, in the thirteenth century, English thought and society were mediæval, and in the nineteenth century they were not."

Daring as the statement may appear, the writer was Master of Trinity College at the time, and his estimate, though pungently expressed, has the ring of truth. Indeed, one might take it a step further and assert that, with certain qualifications, English thought and society in the mid-twentieth century differed in numerous aspects from the thought and society of the Victorian period.

The inflation of the pneumatic tyre, the deflation of the ego, and the inflation of inflation *per se* had brought about a levelling "up," accompanied by a levelling "down," as a result of which it was possible to demonstrate to the most cynical of foreign critics that whatever else British politics might be they were strictly on the level.

First at a private meeting of the Pregnant with Meaning Society, later at a secret meeting of the Carlton Club, the late Earl Baldwin expressed this truth in telling fashion when he said "We are all Socialists now." It was on this latter occasion that a leading member of the Club, excited by the aphorism, remarked to the late Lord Balfour

"That man Stanley B. knows a thing or two." To this Lord Balfour is alleged to have replied "Even were we optimistic enough to assume the higher total to be correct, we might yet venture to doubt the ultimate adequacy of this sum of knowledge."

Lord Balfour was of course a sceptic and, during his long lifetime, did much to popularize English scepticism abroad. He said things in Chicago, during the launching of the debt for World War I, and later in Paris, where he was helping to launch World Peace I, which showed that, given proper study of consumer-needs and strict adherence to delivery schedules, England could still successfully compete with the most skilled sceptics of those two cities.

His "approach attitude" (which, as

To them, after all, Blackpool, Llandudno, Scarborough, and even, in the fullest sense of the term, Bournemouth, were but seaside resorts, often inaccessible to all but the most intrepid holiday-makers, since the roads were already quite inadequate to the country's needs, and infested by sturdy beggars produced by the Enclosures. It must, moreover, be recalled that at that time any form of sea-coast was repellent to most English folk, who mentally word-associated the sea around them with the bad fish which Protestant Elizabeth, no less than Roman Catholic Mary, compelled them to eat on Fridays. The fishing industry was feather-bedded.

Yet, with characteristic English pertinacity, they fared onward, buoyed up by a rugged faith that somewhere ahead lay, though still shrouded in obscurity, the twentieth century. It was the same spirit in which the late Earl Baldwin is reported to have said that in moments of near-despair he comforted himself with the thought that "to-day" is only a prelude to the situation as it will be five hundred years hence.

Achievement of a just estimate of the past is doubly fraught with difficulty when we consider the entire question of economics. Modern man, with economics at his disposal night and day in every room of the house, finds it an almost impossible feat of the imagination to cast his mind back to a period when such amenities were virtually unknown. Not even the richest merchants of Tudor times had blueprints.

It is true to say that in those days people in, for example, the upper Baron brackets, who could afford economics at all, tended to take them for granted. Others simply did without, doggedly performing yeoman service.

Lacking the aid of economics, many took refuge in religion, or service in foreign wars. Fighting to extend the wool trade or the slave trade, a healthy man could get as much economics as he wanted. Moreover there were always institutions such as Venice and the Hanseatic League ready to supply lavish economics to Englishmen with characteristic stoutness of heart and character. Anyone with a reasonably



Detail from a portrait of Carlyle by J. M. Whistler.

Menace, of the University of Memphis, Tennessee, has pointed out, was essentially "inter-directed") may have been influenced by his inability to see what was going to happen next. It was, however, an inability which he shared with Cobden. Both had unhappy experiences connected with the State of Illinois, though in other respects they were dissimilar. Thus Carlyle described Cobden as an "inspired bagman."

The question has often been asked: If it must be assumed that the people of past epochs in our history did not know what these epochs were leading up to, what made them go on? How did men—and women too—who could not have foreseen the 1950s, find the inspiration to carry out their often arduous day-to-day tasks as Reeves, Water-bailiffs, Canterbury Pilgrims and the like?

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debating reputation has been
lowered, but his personal popularity

Mr. Balfour in 1902. A contemporary
caricature.

good I.Q. rating could get into the Muscovy fur-trade and have economics on a scale which his grandfather, who might have been no more than a villein, would have envied.

A striking feature of the subsequent era was the fact that people were influenced—often publicly—by economists. Folk, that is to say, not only read



Adam Smith 1723-1790, from a drawing in the Czerny Collection (damaged).

what they wrote but frequently acted on the assumption that it was true.

The early economists made their name by favouring *laissez-faire*. It was said of Adam Smith, by a late eighteenth-century wit, that had he not existed it would have been necessary to invent him. (The conception was, as is now known, far-fetched. He did exist, therefore it was not necessary to invent him.)

Although a Scot, and a contemporary, let us note, of Hume, A. Smith was in many ways a typical economist, and there were not wanting those who detected in his behaviour ominous warnings of things to come. He was hospitable, generous and jolly, but as early as Chapter XI of *The Wealth of Nations* he was going about London peering at girls in the streets, trying to make up his mind whether the English ones had better complexions than the Irish. This was a rash proceeding for a man in his position as Father of Political

Economy, although it should be remembered that Sir Robert Peel had not yet organized our modern police force.

There was worse to come, for, on deciding that the Irish were better looking, Smith gave wide publicity to the theory that this was the result of a potato diet. The deluded Irish, always apt to attach undue importance to personal appearance, immediately ploughed up everything else and planted potatoes, the result being the disastrous famine of 1847. The economist became known as Ould Ireland's Ruin, and—as Thackeray found when he visited the island—the names "Smith" and "Adam" are less common in Ireland than elsewhere.

Smith and his successors have been criticized on other grounds for "wasting time." Had they realized that *laissez-faire* and the Manchester School and so on were going to come to what Threat, of the University of Omaha, has described as "a darned sticky end" would they not have been better advised to have let the Mercantile School peter out in the ordinary course of events and then move up? But they were essentially men of the Age, and we must remember that even *laissez-faire* seemed a good idea at the time.

To their credit be it said, however, that there were numerous economists of the period who, realizing they were all on the wrong tack, resolutely refused to write, or even think, about the subject. That is the sole reason why their names are now unknown. Many thinkers in other intellectual fields took the same view. The talented Duke of R——, on being asked by George Eliot why he did not "do something definite about philosophy," replied that although he esteemed abstract thought above all things, he did not want "to make a b—— fool" of himself in the eyes of the twentieth century.

It is scarcely possible to state the exact moment when economists began to decline in importance and influence. Before the first decade of the twentieth century was out we find W. Hewins, ex-director of the London School of Economics, complaining with shrill bitterness of "the indifference of statesmen, officials and business men, and the incapacity of the public to understand." Maynard Keynes probably accelerated the process. His ideas were found to be a strain on the public mind, being

perplexing when right and disastrous when wrong. There was approval for M. Norman, late Governor of the Bank of England, who said of these monetary theories "there is no problem about money, except who has it."

Norman was of course a sceptic, and his policy of lending freely to the Germans any English money that was not nailed down did much to encourage scepticism in others.

In Russia, economists picked their way gingerly among the deviations, "always," as the whimsical Radek had once put it, "hoping against hope to achieve full Marx." The Americans, restless as ever, were ceaselessly expanding the frontiers of the Harvard Business School and, eyes shadowed against the westering sun as it sank behind the high Sierras, were out looking for trends. Some "struck it rich" and built themselves baroque mansions on Baruch Boulevard.

Others never came back, and maybe the sewers of Los Angeles could tell a tale.

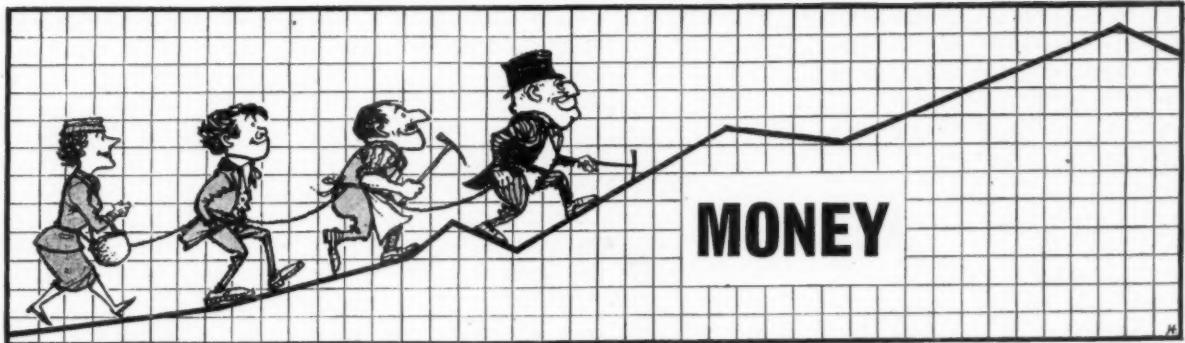
But in England, though the economists' house organ *The Economist* fought on gallantly in their interests, and performers like Jay and Balogh and others still had their "fans," who were sometimes responsible for hysterical scenes in the lecture halls of London or Oxford, more and more people were tending to handle economics on a do-it-yourself basis. Tax-evasion kits, and easy-to-make wage demands were becoming simplified.

In the pregnant words of the Chairman of General Directorates, England had "called in the expense account to redress the balance of the account book."



Karl Marx. An early photograph





10. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 1953, 48, 377-385.

M

EN of probity like to pay their debts. Men of intelligence are not misled by nouns of assembly such as "the State" or "the Nation" into the belief that such

airy abstractions exist apart from the members who make them up or can have responsibilities not shared by the general public. Men of intelligence *and* probity, therefore, cannot shut their eyes to the National Debt, or shrug it off as something nasty in the woodshed next door.

We owe a matter of £26,719,150,783 (excluding debts arising out of the 1914-18 war).

The above figure, like all other figures quoted in this article, is out of date. Statistics always lag behind the event, and reference books of the current year tend to have been removed from the shelves by somebody else. But anybody who has any better figures is at liberty to substitute them in the margin; the general tenor of my argument is unlikely to be affected.

To whom do we owe this ponderous sum? I find that our External Debt, which I take to be what we owe to foreign countries, amounts to some £2,160 millions (give or take a few millions), and I have been at pains to discover my own share of what is uncontestedly a debt of honour. Taking the population as a rough thirty-six million (I exclude fourteen million under-20s on the ground that they are

not legally to blame, and a small batch of over-85s on the ground that one would never get them to understand that they ought to divvy up) I calculate that our foreign indebtedness per head comes out at £60. This is a surprisingly moderate figure, and there certainly seems to be a case for a quick whip-round and an end to this intolerable burden. If the price of a 14-inch TV set (give or take an inch) is all that stands between me and a clean sheet overseas, I am for immediate payment, preferably in kind.

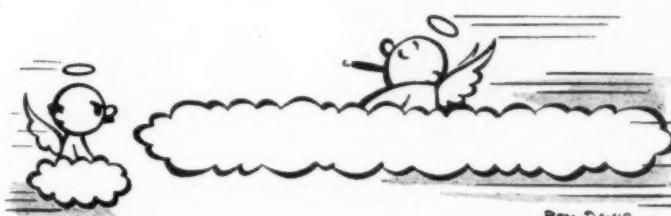
That done, we shall be able to turn our attention to the more formidable £24,500 millions of Internal Debt. My personal share of this comes to about £680, but the indebtedness is in this case by no means so straightforward. The Internal Debt seems to consist almost wholly of money owed to people who have lent sums to the government in return for Treasury Stock, Defence Bonds, National Savings Certificates and other bits of paper; it is money that as members of the nation we owe ourselves as individuals. This in itself is bizarre. Furthermore, in considering how to raise the £680 that is my mathematical share of the debt, I am bound to reflect that I myself hold a few trumpery Bonds and Certificates. Can I deduct their value from my indebtedness? Or have things come to such a

pass that I actually owe the money I myself lent?

This leads me on to the further question, can we pay? Should it be decided that we had better discharge this vast internal debt to ourselves and make a fresh start, is there enough money in the country to do it with?

Well, there certainly isn't enough money. The total amount of "notes and coin outstanding" (which, if it means anything must mean the actual money knocking about here and there) is less than a miserable two thousand million—or twenty-two thousand million short. Nor is it any good telling me that the debt can be discharged by transfers of stock, of which there is bound to be a lot about, though I cannot anywhere find it totted up in my reference books. If we are simply going to hand each other bundles of stock in full settlement we might as well keep the bits of paper we have already and call it a day. No, the only way to determine whether the country is in fact in a position to clear its own internal debt is to talk in terms of national *wealth*, which includes rolling stock, productive capacity and, I believe, cathedrals. This automatically brings the discussion to a close. Only trained economists can talk in terms of wealth, and even they are not intelligible to an ordinary debtor.

I shall be told at this point that the



ROY DAVIS

THE ROAD TO RUIN



No. 1. *College Days (Doubling his Money)*



No. 2. *Adulation (The Expense Account)*

After W. P. Frith, R.A.



No. 3. *Tax Collector Rebuffed (Capital Gains)*



No. 4. *The End (Exile)*

issue," handing out free shares, or feathering the capitalist nest. What happens is that the company converts some of its accumulated reserves into new nominal capital. If it makes a one-for-one issue (one new share for every old one held) the shareholder should resist the temptation to order himself a luxury cruise or a new fridge and take a long look at the Stock Exchange quotations. He will find that his two shares are together equal in value to his original unit, and he will at length discover that the dividend paid on each share has been reduced by fifty per cent. Roughly speaking. The idea is of course to allay Socialist suspicions of profiteering. It works.

Scrip-tease is a phenomenon common in the City when City Editors in the Beaverbrook group invent rumours of bonus issues to fill up their columns. (See "Rights.")

blocked sterling. The economist's way of saying that you can't take it with you.

redundancy. Euphemism for unemployment.

liquidity preference. If you would rather keep your money in the teapot than in gilt-edged or industrials you have a liquidity preference. A person is

illiquid (Keynes) when his current financial obligations are in excess of his immediate engrossment of realizable assets.

business cycle. (a) A velocipede used by the Board of a demonstrably patriotic company during a period of petrol shortage. (b) The strange rhythmic alternation of boom and slump which has always afflicted the business world. In ancient Egypt seven fat years were customarily followed by seven lean years: in modern Britain the oscillations have become more frequent, so that economic crises now occur every two years, and supplementary Budgets every month or so. In that fine opinion-moulding weekly *The Economist* booms and slumps now last only a week apiece, waves of optimism and pessimism following each other as regularly as Ministers of Defence. Questioned about this the editor, Mr. Donald Tyerman, would almost certainly say: "It is our way of licking the business cycle: a mild and persistent economic frisson is infinitely preferable to regular bouts of delirium tremens."

gold and dollar reserves. (See "U.S.A." and "Crusader in Chains.")

European payments union. (See "E.P.U.") A. B. H.

A. B. H.

"I DON'T follow you."

"Look at it this way. From April the sixth, 1950, the Dominion Income Tax provisions of the Finance Section 27, ceased to have any effect in this country."

Act 1920, Section 27, ceased to have effect except in respect of Eire."

"I find that hard to believe."

"Therefore from and including the income-tax year 1950 to 1951 where tax was paid in a foreign country with whom we have no double taxation agreement credit would be allowed against United Kingdom tax in respect of the foreign tax. Lumbago quite gone now?"

"Well, what can I claim for petrol?"

"But the rate at which the relief is given is restricted to half that rate."

“What rate?”

"And bear in mind, where no specific exemption is granted, credit is



"Good heavens, not the Croesus!"

allowed against the United Kingdom liability in respect of the foreign tax, but the rate of relief must not exceed a rate arrived at by dividing the tax payable by the amount of the total income after adding back relief for life assurance. Would you like a cup of tea?"

"Yes."

"Then again, to take another instance. As from October the first, 1949, the profits tax rate was increased to thirty per cent and the non-distribution relief to twenty per cent. We move with the times, you see. From January the first, 1947, to September the thirtieth, 1949, it had been fifteen."

"Had it?"

"Certainly it had. Two lumps? The tax rate was further increased to fifty per cent on January the first, 1951, and the rate of non-distribution relief to forty. If the profits do not exceed two thousand pounds including investment income no tax is payable, and if they are more than two thousand but less than twelve an abatement will be made. Quite simple."

"A what?"

"An abatement."

"What about my wife's lame uncle? He has to have chicken."

"Quite. Now here's another thing, before I forget. Bounty payments to Z-men are exempt and so are annuities not payable under a deed except voluntary pensions."

"That bill for bed and breakfast at the Metropole, Birmingham, last January. You've lost it, haven't you?"

"I'm coming to that. The occupier of woodlands managed on a commercial basis may elect to come under Schedule D instead of B, but normally the occupier of land having an occupational value must be taxed under Schedule B. That's obvious. Amenity land, to take one example. Rents exceeding gross annual value are assessable less a proportionate allowance for repairs."

"I don't occupy woodlands."

"Not yet you don't. Now, the liability to tax at eight and sixpence on statutory income is reducible by allowances as you know. Tax on two-ninths of husband and wife's income up to tax on £450, tax on seven-ninths of wife's up to £140, tax on £100 for each child provided they are alive during the fiscal year and have not attained sixteen years at April the sixth except in the case



of articled clerks, including illegitimate children if the parents have married since birth. Did I mention Schedule A?"

"I don't feel well."

"You don't look well. I'll open the window. Where the average cost of repairs for the last five years exceeds the scale allowance granted the allowance is increased by such excess. Rents exceeding gross annual value are assessable less a proportionate allowance for repairs."

"You said that before. Don't keep on saying that."

"Is there anything you're not clear about?"

"These little forms. God help me, what are all these little forms?"

"Stop crying. I want you to look on me as your friend. Should the total amount deducted for income tax at source from income from investments including dividends, mortgages, interest or rents exceed the amount due on total income, many persons are entitled to

recover by claiming to the Inspector enclosing dividend vouchers proving deduction at source within a period of six years after the end of the tax year for which the claim is made, that is for 1950 to 1951 onwards if made before April the sixth, 1957. Your cigarette is burning your hat."

"I want to go away. I want to make a very deep hole in the ground and stay there until nothing matters."

"I shall miss you. Have you seen a doctor?"

"What is the upshot of it all? The upshot, damn it, the upshot, the upshot!"

"The assessment is correct. I have done my best, but you must pay. And you cannot claim for stationery."

"I shall be allowed to live on, taking comfort from the wild flowers on the heath?"

"Yes. And of course you owe me another ten guineas. Have a cigar."

ALEX



Y DEAR JOHNNIE,
—So next Monday you
will end your career as
an office-boy and start
work in the House.
I am pleased that you

should come to me for advice, and though I ought to warn you that it is not I but your Uncle Julian who is a stockbroker, a fact that I feel you would have done well to check on sooner, let it never be said that any of my nephews brought a problem to me that I did not at least try to resolve for him.

As it happens, I have once been to the public gallery that surrounds the Stock Exchange, and I have read quite a lot about it in books. The gallery is sealed off from the room by thick sheets of glass, like those booths you may have seen in Brixton Prison where you speak to the inmates, so it is not possible to hear what the stockbrokers are saying. Even if it was, you'd find it hard to understand at first, as they apparently use a private argot in the way the R.A.F. used to before they were disbanded. For example, you might be told by a jobber that "Kaffirs are close over the figure." This would have nothing to do with the Kaffirs' fashions in dress, or even their sexual habits; "close" in this context means threepence three-



"What are you grumbling about? We used to have to sleep on sovereigns."

farthings. I won't insult your intelligence by telling you why.

Jobbers, by the way, are the people who have seats at the foot of those big square pillars that hold up the Stock Exchange roof. It is from them that you will have to buy any stocks or shares you need, though I think I am right in saying that you won't be allowed to buy any for a little while and will have to get one of the partners in your firm to do it for you. I'm sure they won't mind. Let me know if you have any trouble; I was at school with Lord Bullsted and he will do anything for me; almost.

The standard of behaviour is pretty rough-and-tumble, but after all you have lived in an officers' mess and ought to be able to take a bit of horse-play. The level of humour is roughly that of pinning pieces of paper on the back of people's coats saying "I am a bear" or something of that sort, or so I am informed. It is also on the Stock Exchange that all smutty stories are first invented. On the other hand, I believe that in moments of great national crisis such as a change in the Bank Rate everybody in the House stands up and they all sing "God Save the Queen" in unison.

Seated on small thrones at various points about the room are men of great dignity called waiters. You had better get to know them pretty quickly, as they are the chaps who will be responsible for fetching your drinks from the Consols Bar, which is that affair at the end of the room under the war memorial, and you want to have them on your side. They are also very helpful if you want to send for one of your partners, as they are allowed to shout out their names in a way which I must say I always envied when I was in Parliament. It would be a bit awkward if they had to call for "the honourable broker for Lowenstein, Mackenzie and De Groot" every time, wouldn't it?

Another thing the waiters are responsible for is hammering people when they can't meet their obligations. The hammers they use are quite small, but I dare say it's a pretty nasty sight even so, and I trust it may never happen to you.

Your own work, I imagine, will mostly consist of finding out the prices of stocks and shares, and the jobbers have these prominently displayed on boards, like bookies. Do be careful what figures

you take down, as there seem to be a lot of irrelevant ones. A youngster I once knew had a ghastly experience. He saw chalked up on a jobber's board the legend "S.A. 50-1" and went around telling everyone that Smelly Archangel, the favourite for the National, had slumped badly on profit-taking and was being quoted at fifties. Of course what it really meant was that the South Africans were fifty for one in a Test Match. A lot of his friends went down badly and he lost his job.

I enclose a cheque with which you can buy some blue buttons for your coat, as I understand you will have to wear these; if there is any change you can put it in Bulls or Bears or something for me. Get your mother to sew them on—the buttons, I mean. I dare say they will look pretty silly, but they're no doubt part of the great tradition of the City.

People who deal in Gilts, by the way, wear top-hats, which they are said never to take off; so perhaps your education at Eton wasn't really so completely wasted after all.

Your affectionate uncle,
B. A. Y.

By a Victim of Inflation



stiff collar a help. Quite early in the economic blizzard, when it was a mere flurry, the mellow, time-warmed house I had loved so well had to go. It was roomy, it was gracious, it had character and a barely perceptible subsidence. To sell in the open market would have been a soulless, shabby way of treating a trusted and tried companion, but I was able to give the dear old place a new span of life and at the same time help a friendless exile in need. He was a Jamaican, seeking to give shelter to

some of his homeless compatriots by splitting the premises into eight compact flats let at realistic rents. So warm was his feeling for his fellow-countrymen that he impulsively outbid by 25 per cent several local prospective buyers. It was a credit to him, as I said at the time and as his bank manager later confirmed. But Gad! it was a wrench. A capital gain, maybe, and as such not subject to income tax, but a bitter loss.

Then there was the boy's school—mine too before him, and my father's before me, in that order. Up went the fees, down went Geoffrey's place in form, but the little rascal got all his colours. I stinted, I skimped. I got so mean they started calling me Tekel Upharsin. But there came a time when I just couldn't meet the school bills. The boy's whole future was at stake; I owed it to him to give him his chance, but I owed a lot elsewhere. At last I saw a way. I gave up my career in the City—the governors were very decent about it and didn't keep me hanging about—and made an arrangement with the school. I took a job as groundsman with board but without salary, and my wife came as matron on the same terms, our services being accepted in settlement of the annual fees. I wondered how we should do for those dearly-prized little luxuries—the occasional pipe or cigarette, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Glyndebourne, and so on—but I must say it worked out rather better than I had expected. Chatting with the boys at the nets—I have, they tell me, rather a flair for putting the other fellow at his ease—I found myself acquiring a considerable amount of not uninteresting gossip about their families. An impending divorce here, a club blackballing there, and before you

could say John Halifax I had a fairly remunerative connection with three or four Sunday paper columns. In the end I had slightly improved on my City income.

When the boy was called up and I was back in the City I had to pick up the threads. They were bare as far as my office suits were concerned. My wife, who had flung herself eagerly into the Do-It-Yourself campaign, ran me up some serviceable two-piece tweeds that never wore out. I don't think they ever will; they haven't had the continuous wear they could take. Clothes actually fitted by men with pins and chalk began to soar out of my reach, but here again, as in my other difficulties, I worked out a sturdy plan for sending the wolf whistling, instead of just putting a paper-weight against the door. If this country is ever to be great again we must all pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps, as I have done. Giving things up, I discovered as I gave up more and more, has its compensations in private life as in politics. Just as a base which has sheltered British troops or ships for a century or more is found to be obsolete and indeed rather a nuisance when the natives say we can't have it any longer, so the item of dress that becomes too dear is seen to be unnecessary, and, better, to make others unnecessary. If the topper goes [we retire from Egypt] what is the use of the morning coat [or Canal Base]? Away, too, with the white collars and so on until the bowler becomes a mere Trincomalee and here we are, standing alone snug in our tight little island of grey flannels and pullovers, as after Dunkirk, with just the merest outpost or two, a Malta dinner jacket here and a Tristan da Cunha summer linen coat there.

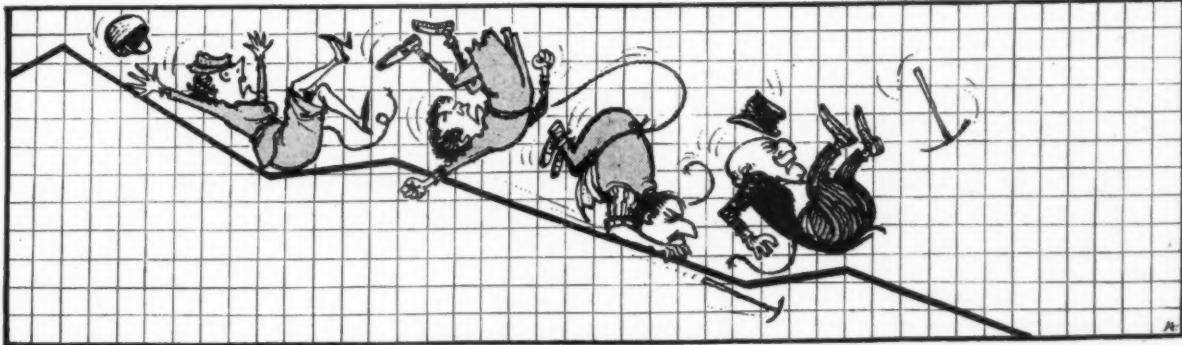


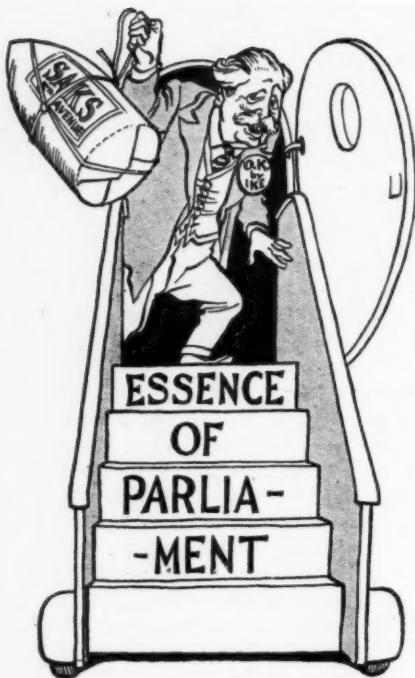
ROY DAVIS

The car, of course, had had to go. A succession of trading-in deals changed it first to a scooter, then to a motor-bike and finally a push-bike. Each of these transactions showed a small profit, but this was swallowed up by the extra wear and tear on clothes, and now I have had to take the bicycle off the road as I felt so discourteous refusing lifts to pedestrians in distress after it was made illegal for passengers to stand on the step or sit on the carrier. We of the old régime never quite escape this *noblesse oblige* feeling.

I could weary you with many other details of large and small sacrifices uncomplainingly borne but I hope I have said enough to show that we of the middle class, crushed between the upper and nether millstones as we may be, can yet march breast forward never doubting, captains of our souls, and keep right on to the end of the road.

F. L. M.





M R. BUTLER had to go to London Airport to meet the Prime Minister, so Mr. Thorncroft, tearing himself away from the Poodle Show, led the House instead. The House appreciated the compliment and gave him a warm, if perhaps in some circles an ironical, cheer when he rose to reply. He was giving nothing away about H-bombs or anything else. Nor was Mr. Macleod. If he had no spectacular successes to report about other efforts of conciliation, at least he was able to calm down a row on the Socialist back-benches which threatened to flare up between Mr. Jack Jones and Mr. Charles Pannell. He did so gracefully.

Commander Noble's escape was less easy. He was bombarded from all sides for his inability to say how British ships in the Suez Canal would pay their dues. But, poor man, he obviously just had not got authority to say, and that was that. Indeed, what between "Answer" and "Oh" and Mr. Paul Williams and Mr. Reggie Paget, he was rather to be commended in that he was not goaded into saying something that would afterwards have to be explained away. "Shaky and cagy," thought Mr. Shinwell; but surely the fair verdict is

"cagy" but not "shaky." The week's news in Question-time was, of course, Archbishop Makarios' release, from Mr. Lennox-Boyd, on Thursday.

So to feather-beds. The trouble now is, thought Mr. Tom Williams, that we do not want any more milk or eggs or wheat or pigs. Mr. Williams complained that it had taken the Government ten years to come to the penitent form, and even now they had only crept there on their hands and knees. But there was nothing crawl-minded about Mr. Heathcoat Amory as he plunged into his bath of surplus milk, nor indeed any great reason why there should have been. The general mark of the debate was the number of different interests that Members had to ventilate. We may have too many pigs, but at least it seems that we have not got too many hobby-horses.

This week, while faiths and empires gleamed and while the social system rocked to its catastrophe, the House of Lords was occupied with yet more momentous matters. The great Shops Bill was on its last lap, and high decisions had to be taken. By the First Schedule anyone who on an early closing day sells after 1 p.m. most of the things that anyone would want to buy is guilty of high crime, but "under certain circumstances" our masters graciously agree that he may sell "bread." Yet naturally there is nothing about his selling currants. "What happens if a currant has got into the bread?" Lord Lucas wanted to know. Lord Strathclyde, for

the Government, was not quite clear. But, he pleaded, under Clause II the authority had power to make regulations. Currant bread would certainly be considered and the traders—alike those who sold bread and those who sold currants—would be consulted. Doubtless, if the worst came to the worst, a Conciliation Committee under Sir Wilfred Neden would be appointed to bring the bread and the currant together and to keep them talking. After all, was not the whole purpose of the bill to tidy up the law? An even graver issue was raised by the Second Schedule. By that Schedule the citizen is permitted to buy food in prohibited hours for "consumption in a railway-train, omnibus or aircraft." But what, asked Lord Giffard and Lord Swinton, if he bought a ham sandwich and ate it in a tram? Lord Hailsham, playing for time, wondered whimsically what an omnibus might be, but it was the wonder of Gilbert's Mikado. There was little doubt that if Lord Swinton started munching in a tram the axe would fall.

As far as voting goes, the Government has had more difficulties about the Rent Bill than about any of its other measures. Margate for them is worse than Suez—"the Margate mutineers, carrying their Jolly Rogers," said Mr. Mitchison—and Mr. Rees Davies and Sir Ian-Horobin were determined to maintain their protest on the floor of the House. On the floor but not in the lobby. There they would do no more than abstain from supporting their own



Mr. Heathcoat Amory "in his bath of surplus milk."



Lord Swinton and the Shops Act

motion, but even their abstentions brought down the Government's majority into the twenties. The system being as it is, one of course understands very well Sir Ian Horobin's reluctance to vote. Mrs. Braddock on the opposite bench lolled back, with her legs stretched in front of her as if before a parlour fire, in a manner that was in itself a form of criticism; but no Parliamentarian can seriously hold it against Sir Ian. Had all the mutineers voted, the Government might well have been beaten. But the reason that he *gave* for not voting—as opposed to his reason for not voting—was a little peculiar. "There is no

point," he said, "in forcing a vote against it now. What will happen? All the people who have not listened to the debate will come in. The bells will ring—Clear the lobbies, bring in the dancing girls."

But this surely, if a reason for not voting now, is a reason for not voting ever—because that is what always happens—or almost always. As it turned out, this was one of the rare occasions when it did not happen. For the bells rang too soon and the dancing girls—and boys—were shut out. The Chairman's clock went wrong, and as a result the order "Lock the doors" for the division was given prematurely with a large huddle of Conservative Members the wrong side of the door. It looked as if, should the division be taken then, the Government would be beaten not through the revolt but through sheer slow motion of its supporters. Here indeed was a pretty kettle of fish. Points of order, after a division has been called, may only be raised by a Member seated and with a hat on his head. Sir William Anstruther-Gray tried it with an Order Paper on his head, but an Order Paper is no more a hat than is currant a bun or tram an omnibus. One must above all things preserve the rule of law. Commander Langford Holt produced a brown trilby—with difficulty—out of his pocket. One never knows what may come in useful; but the resources of civilization were not exhausted. It is often complained that in these sartorially decadent days Members no longer come to the House in top hats. The only Member so equipped was, it seems—believe it or not—the Socialist lady Member, Mrs. Mann.

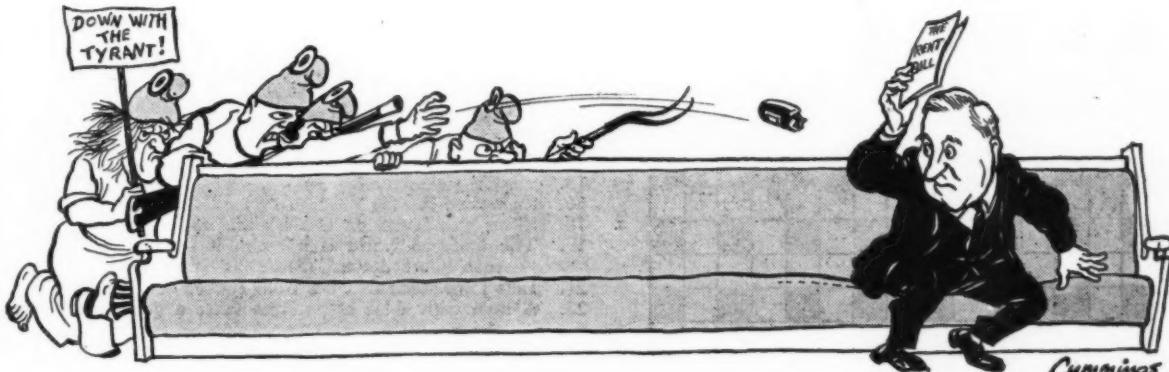
With a gesture of gallantry that amply repays any debt which Woman may have owed to Man on account of Sir Walter Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth she handed the top-hat over to the Conservative party and the Government was saved. Christian civilization breathed again.

On Obscene Publications, Lord Lambton opened well and Mr. Roy Jenkins batted sturdily later in the innings. The only trouble with Lord Lambton was that the case that the Law is a hass is so overwhelming that we had little but a procession of speaker after speaker saying so. The question of course is whether the new bill had got the answers, and there again Lord Lambton a little disarmed debate by his readiness to accept amendments. Would the Home Office give facilities for the bill to move towards the Statute Book? The Home Office is a very different place now, with the Home Secretary and Mr. Jack Simon in it, from what it used to be in other days. A Standing Committee is not a bad answer. "Sex," said Mr. Edelman, "is a matter of taste." But the true Freudian would say rather taste is a matter of sex.

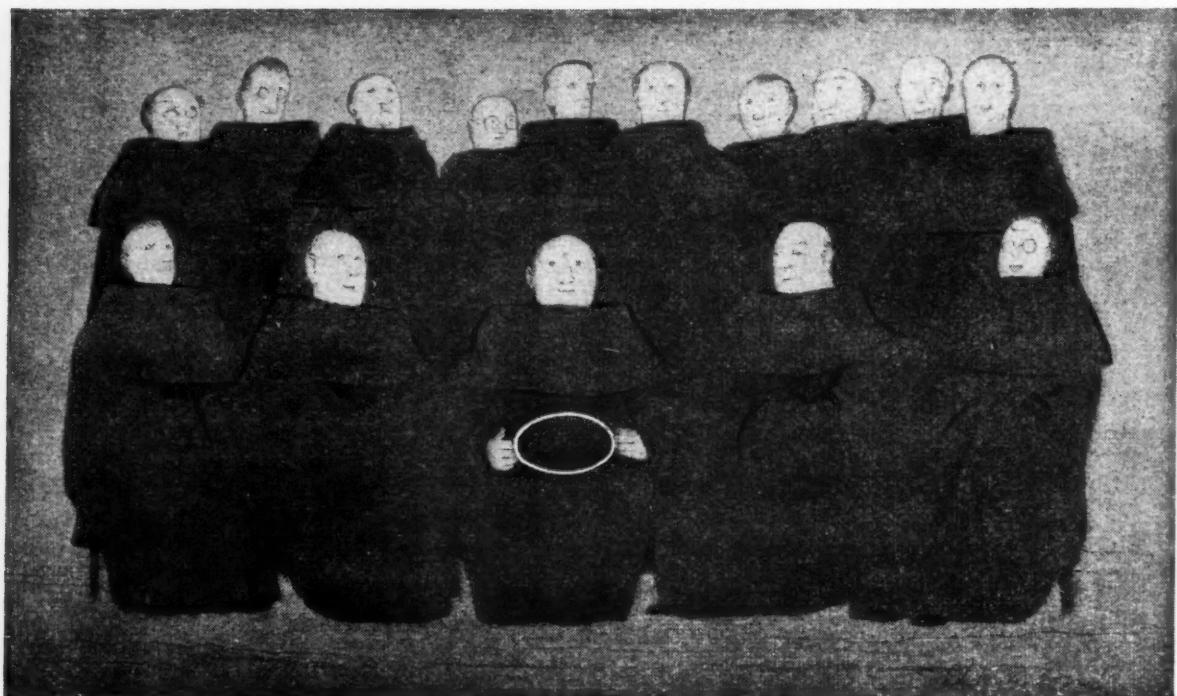
CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

"W. BIRD"

We record with regret the death of Jack B. Yeats, the painter, who between 1910 and 1941 contributed to *Punch* many small drawings which he signed "W. Bird."



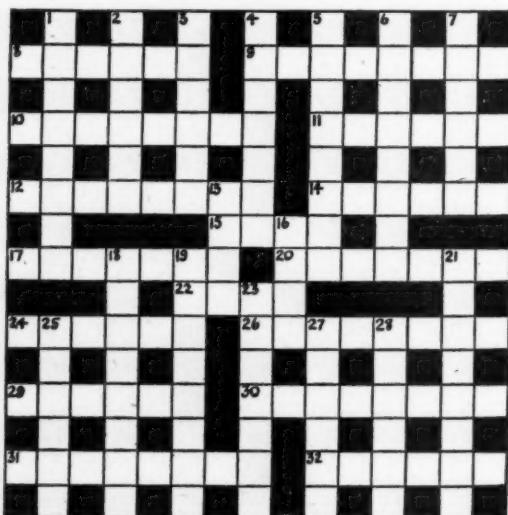
Mr. Brooke



Money Crossword

ACROSS

8. To do this to assets brings them nearer zero. (6)
9. This displays Gaspard boosting up his credit. (8)
10. We have to take the Chancellor's word for it. (8)
11. A citizen of credit eke was he. (6)
12. Shows how a man with the magic touch can flourish on nothing. (8)
14. Suffered capital loss during a French take-over bid. (6)



Solution next week

15. Seth's son is cut off from a modern demand for a merger. (4)
17. Preposterously I cement the *entente cordiale* by offering this tip. (7)
20. Among the "sundries" in the balance sheet? (7)
22. Situation of a sheltered industry. (4)
24. Money invested abroad. (6)
26. A trustee sees gain, or the chance of making it. (8)
29. He blocked his liquid assets. (6)
30. Banking was right up their street. (8)
31. Financier who does so should concentrate on Taurus and Libra. (8)
32. The talent wrapped in the napkin. (6)

DOWN

1. Money for this is easy. (8)
2. No credit given here. (6)
3. Getting a bit of your own back. (6)
4. He played the horses unwisely. (7)
5. It was not easy money writing this novel. (4, 4)
6. Ladies! It needs a different make-up to get a fine fellow who scorns money. (8)
7. Allowing everything to go. (2, 4)
13. Textile stockholder. (4)
16. So we are 7. (4)
18. Silver was found on this island. (8)
19. The financial world is a realm it needs altering for a man like 6 down. (8)
21. Like joint stock that has been cooked too much. (8)
23. A man with a lot of potatoes takes a quick profit with these. (7)
25. Scene of a moneylender's rating. (6)
27. Could it have been L.M.S. pie that such a man wanted without capital outlay? (6)
28. Wild talking in terms of guineas brings gifts. (6)



The Chancellor's Dish

A FEW months ago the Budget seemed to be anybody's race and the tipsters were able to discuss the prospects of such nags as Sales Tax, Capital Gains, Surtax Relief, Family Allowances, Pensions and Entertainment with their customary ebullience and irresponsibility. The most popular "three to follow" were Sales Tax, Surtax Relief and Capital Gains, with Tanner Off as the favourite e.w. cert. from the City stable of rumour.

But in recent weeks the going has become harder. The bill for Suez has come in, strikes have snowballed, by-elections show a decided swing away from the Conservatives, the gold and dollar reserves teeter on the edge of insolvency and the cuts in red tape and Defence estimates prove to be snips rather than slashes. In the circumstances the very notion of a budget leakage is ludicrous: Mr. Thorneycroft may be forgiven if he fails to make up his own mind much before 2.45 p.m. on April 9.

Before the shipyard stoppage it seemed likely that the Government would be able to introduce a strong Conservative Budget, a tonic made up according to the prescription advertised in the 1955 election manifesto. The watered-down Socialism of 1951-55 was doing the country very little good. Our industrial production was standing still, our scientists were emigrating, the middle-classes had lost heart, and factory workers, stuffed with carrots and padded against the stick, seemed to be living from one wage-claim to the next.

The by-elections, Lewisham in particular, reinforced Mr. Macmillan's determination to press on with his little counter-revolution. It was wiser, surely, to risk unpopularity in 1957 rather than 1960. A good dose of Old Mother Woolton's herbal remedy might do the trick: the psychiatric nostrums of Dr. Butler wouldn't. So I for one

expected to see our system of taxation completely overhauled.

In particular I expected purchase tax to be replaced by a general sales tax. A ten per cent retail tax on all consumer goods (food excepted) would yield far more than P.T., and in my view would cost less to collect, and the funds blotted up in this way would provide elbow-room for significant concessions in direct taxation—the Tanner Off and incentive reductions in the life sentence of junior surtax-payers.

Mind you, I am not here advocating a sales tax. I regard all indirect taxation as regressive and therefore unjust and—in our present wages dilemma—inflationary. But if direct taxes are to be cut a sales tax offers the most convenient and administratively feasible

method of shifting the burden from shoulder to shoulder. A sales tax, in various forms, is in force in some states of the U.S.A., in Russia, France, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, Italy and Spain, so it would be nonsensical to suppose that a sales tax here and now would make Britain back-marker in the march of social and economic progress.

All this, however, is likely to prove theoretical and diverting, for Mr. Thorneycroft can hardly avoid considering the mood of the unions in his scratch-pad deliberations. My guess is that most of the bold promises and new-look fiscal patterns will disappear by April 9. I shall be surprised if the middle-classes get much to sing about. And I shall be disappointed if they don't.

MAMMON

* * *



WS

Starving the Land

FARMING costs have risen by £38,000,000 during the past twelve months. That is, legitimate expenses such as wages, fuel and feeding stuffs, but excluding the odd feather bed and the big car. At the Annual Price Review the Government increased subsidies to agriculture by £14,000,000, chiefly on the use of fertilizers, which leaves farmers with a deficiency of £24,000,000 to find during the next year. They are told that they can do it by increasing their efficiency.

I take that as a personal insult—though when I look at my wheelbarrow with its flat punctured tyre I must say there is some justification in their criticism. Yet in the main farmers have become so efficient during the last ten years that they are in danger of boring themselves out of business. What wastage there is in agriculture now cannot be arrested by increased skill but only by increasing farmers' capital.

We ask no more or less than this: to be given access to our own credit. If I ask a bank manager for a loan of

£1,000 to buy a combine harvester he'll either refuse altogether to make the advance or, by demanding 5½ per cent interest, make the burden of the loan more than the farm can bear. Gold-mining may be able to fork out 6 per cent or more, I dare say an oil well could find up to 10 per cent, but land cannot meet usurious demands. And there is a difference between a just return on capital and a rake-off which is usury.

Land under modern farming conditions needs capitalizing up to £100 per acre. Most of us are jogging along on £25. That is why our implements are worn out; it is not a sentimental attachment to pre-war tractors.

It's odd how English investors will join together and form companies to raise beef in the Argentine, coffee in Kenya, or peaches in Australia, but will never invest in Devonshire wool and Norfolk wheat. How many public companies whose business is to farm in England are registered on the London Stock Exchange? Can I persuade nobody to provide the money to blow up my wheelbarrow tyre?

Of course it would be easy at 6 per cent, but land can pay only 2 per cent. Many of our large agricultural estates have for generations been maintained on a return of 1 per cent. Death duties now break up these family estates, and the insurance companies, who invariably become the new owners, are not content with anything under 6 per cent.

I could pay 10 per cent on my place if I were to grow barley year after year, and pass a desert on to my son. In the Dark Ages usury was defined precisely, and the extortion of it was regarded as a cardinal sin. Now we are more broadminded. RONALD DUNCAN



BOOKING OFFICE

The Keynes Mutiny

Sterling-Dollar Diplomacy. Richard N. Gardner. *Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, 42/-*

ONE of Mr. Bemelmans' less endearing stories concerns the young waiter who returns from the United States to visit his native Germany, then in the grips of galloping inflation, and shames the old professor who had humiliated him in his school-days, by taking him to dinner in the most expensive restaurant in Munich. Something of the same feelings may have animated the American State Department Treasury advisers who were called upon to entertain Keynes on his visits to Washington when the projects with which this book deals were under negotiation. Unsuccessful products of Middle Western universities whom the New Deal had washed up in the most unlikely places, they had all of them in their time sat at Keynes' feet and he had told them how to run the economy of their vast and extraordinary country. Keynes with his great controversial powers, his personal magnetism, his wide interests, his knowledge of men and events, was also one of those unsuccessful business men with whom Roosevelt adored to surround himself, and the part of Voltaire at Potsdam was a congenial one. Ten years later he had returned to plead with the new pundits on behalf of his battered and bewildered country.

Keynes' prestige in the United States was enormous. As far back as 1919 President Wilson's political opponents, resenting intuitively the European responsibilities to which he seemed to be committing them and yet unable to clothe their dreary apprehensions in the language of persuasion, seized on Keynes' *Economic Consequences of the Peace* as armour-piercing ammunition. Keynes' lucid advocacy and unsparing wit gave the U.S. the pretext it needed to disown Wilson and so to condemn to death the League of Nations. Thereafter no deathbed scene of post-Versailles Europe was complete without his presence, a unique combination of

the prophet, the doctor and the undertaker.

On the United States side Harry Dexter White was in charge of post-war planning at the U.S. Treasury. Brought to Washington from the campus by the New Deal, one of his first assignments was to rationalize the irrational silver purchase programme by the creation of a silver bank. The subsequent ruin of China and the world's abandonment of silver as monetary metal were further battle honours in this representative career. Posthumously he has been

could speak to the Americans on economic matters, and his dialectical swiftness was certainly more than a match for anything the House of Lords could bring against him. But he was not nearly as successful in convincing the American politicians who made the policy decisions as he was in influencing the officials who devised them. Obsessed as he was by the post-1918 problems of deflation and unemployment, no event later than the great depression seems to have impinged on his economic thought.

On the other side of the table the American negotiators saw their own country struggling for life in the toils of a vast mercantile and strongly protectionist empire; they never stopped to ask themselves whether this was an appropriate description of the post-war Commonwealth and Keynes never sought to put them right. In the result the negotiators advanced along the road armed with the mutually contradictory maps and compasses that agreed only in not pointing to the North. Keynes had left England perfectly confident that he was going to get, if not a grant in aid, at least a huge interest-free loan. What he eventually did obtain was a commercial loan on conditions so onerous as to make it of little practical use to the U.K., and with provision for the waiver of interest so obscurely drafted that even now it lacks final definition. The post-war world was in fact saved from the ruin to which the intellectual bankruptcy of the economic pact-makers had condemned it only by the Marshall plan, but by this time both Keynes and White were dead. The frontispiece to the present volume, a well-documented, well-argued and well-arranged study, shows White and Keynes standing together, as it were the rattlesnake about to pounce on the rabbit. The bite proved fatal to both.

H. J. D'AVIGDOR-GOLDSMID

accused by the present Attorney-General of the U.S.A. as having been a Russian agent; it would seem on the face of it unnecessary for the Russians to have gone to the expense of suborning an official who was already serving their interests so effectively by his qualities of vanity, ignorance and glibness.

The Atlantic Charter, Lend-Lease, Bretton Woods and the American loan are milestones on the road that translated wartime collaboration between Britain and the U.S.A. into a stable post-war financial system, and responsibility for the fact that this was never achieved cannot be dodged by the principal negotiators involved. Keynes was built up in England as the only man who

Mistakes Re-lived

The Bridge. Pamela Frankau. *Heinemann, 16/-*

David Neilson, "a good, successful middle-brow" novelist and playwright, relives after death the highlights of

his sojourn on earth while crossing a symbolical bridge accompanied by his guardian angel, and is thus brought face to face with the fact that, while actuated by the best of intentions, he betrayed his pacifist principles in wartime, turned away his delightfully mad mother when she needed him most, and was morally responsible for the death of his wife and adolescent daughter.

Miss Frankau retains her professional grasp of story-telling technique, but the flashback method seems a shade contrived and the novel is not on a par with *Tassel-Gentle* or *The Winged Horse*. Neilson's dagger-thin, bi-sexual American wife lacks the poignant charm of her earlier heroines, and the presentation of *au-delà* mechanics is over-orthodox for contemporary taste: many readers, for example, may find it unnecessary that the guardian angel should sprout wings when Heaven's gate is reached at last.

J. M.R.

'No Fine On Fun.' A. P. Herbert. *Methuen, 15/-*

Any simple citizen who still imagines we are governed according to the rules of common sense should read this admirable account of the history of the Entertainments Duty. With the usual assurances that it was only an emergency measure, the tax was first applied in 1916, on turnover, not profits; since then its crazy incidence has been tinkered with twenty times by Parliament, to produce still crazier anomalies. No more damning indictment could be found of its futility than that the original clause for the protection of the Zoo as "partly educational" was used successfully to exempt that uplifting idyll, *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

No one knows more about the whole shabby business than A.P.H., who has fought it manfully, never doubting the black record of the Treasury. His book would be hilarious but for the present tragic strangling of the theatre. The facts are all here, and everyone should be armed with them.

E. O. D. K.

The S.S.: Alibi of a Nation. Gerald Reitlinger. *Heinemann, 35/-*

Mr. Reitlinger has pursued the ultimate detail in the story of the S.S. and its leader Himmler with an eldritch tenacity. He has produced a remarkably complete and well-documented history, but one on which the taint of *parti pris* lies excessively thick. This is hardly surprising, in view of the nature of the subject; but at least Mr. Reitlinger should guard against, for example, calling Heydrich a "cashiered naval officer" on p. 213 when on p. 37 he has told us that he resigned his commission, or labelling as a "hysterical screaming match" an interview between Hitler and Guderian in which, according to Guderian's own account (cited as an authority) the worst sentiment displayed was "profound ill-feeling," or describing Buna as synthetic petrol instead of synthetic rubber. His

theme, implicit in the malapropistic sub-title, is that there are no good Germans and that a load of guilt that properly belongs to the whole nation is being shifted to the backs of the S.S. A secondary theme, adumbrated chiefly in the many footnotes, is that such war criminals as were tried got off jolly easily. Himmler emerges not as a sadistic monster but as a dilatory and muddle-headed mystic, a kind of Nazi Hamlet.

Spite is a bad stimulus for historians; yet it cannot be denied that, with all its faults, this is an important and an interesting book.

B. A. Y.



AT THE DRESS SHOW

Society of Berlin Fashion Houses

IT was not surprising to be told in the opening speech by the German Ambassador that this was the first German Fashion Show to be held in London for twenty years. What did surprise was that, by inference, there must have been German fashions shown over here in the nineteen-thirties. Looking back to the first half of that so very distant-seeming decade one recalls the intense interest in German architecture, German films, German commercial art and display—this last amounting almost to Germania; but no interest in German fashions. There was, of course, *Die Dame*: very fat and glossy, boldly black and white. But its English subscribers were mainly advertising agencies and commercial art studios; and their interest was in the advertising pages. The actual fashions in *Die Dame* seemed themselves to be tainted with the display cult, and derived from the films: every model girl, body and soul, a beautiful blonde spy in a *wagon lit*; every leg crossed in homage to Marlene. And in Germany itself, at that time, one saw little feminine grace or style, no elegant mean between the heavy indoor *frau* and the sportive outdoor *fräulein*.

If these distant impressions are just, then this German fashion show in London was not heralding a post-war renaissance but the birth of something new. For these clothes *did* have style, grace, and elegance. They were clearly and immediately Paris inspired; but in that they showed wisdom. For clothes, to look fashionable, must acknowledge the Paris line. There is no couturier in the world outside France with the influence to set a new line; and although those participating in this display were billed as "the six leading German couturiers," theirs are not *couture* clothes, but wholesale, selling through the shops. The Society of Berlin Fashion Houses is the equivalent of our London

In the article "The Seen and the Unseen," published last week, the price of foundation garments made by Illa Krina should have read "about sixteen guineas."



"I got him at the Army Surplus Stores. Cute, eh?"

Model House Group, not of our "Top Twelve" couturiers.

As such, they compared very favourably with their English counterparts: colouring good, cut simple and uncluttered, materials unusual. These were summer clothes, so there were few tweeds: the few there were did not make one wish for more. But white and natural wool Shetlands were well employed for slim sheath dresses and loose coats. The juxtaposition of rough-surfaced woollens with silks was particularly effective, as was the use of very bold flower-printed wild silks for summer coats over matching dresses. The Dior Saharan tunic was a recurring feature: a long loose tunic jacket, tightly and broadly belted, over a straight slim skirt—chiefly in heavy silk shantung, beige, cinnamon, sand . . . all the colours of the desert.

For summer parties and evenings it was chiffon, chiffon, all the way. So much is this the success fabric of the year that already, with the year but a quarter spent, we begin to surfeit. Here were plain, printed, and penny-spotted chiffons, making dresses, linings, blouses, collars . . . draped and dripped to distraction. But skilfully draped and dripped; in fact the unexpected qualities of these German clothes were their lightness, neatness, airiness and gaiety. Only were the German mannequins a thought too predatory and purposeful for such fragilities. Slim enough and sure enough, they lacked youthful charm. Or was it the hats? The hats were little short of hideous.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

AT THE PLAY

Malatesta
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)
Damn Yankees (COLISEUM)

HENRY DE MONTHERLANT's *Malatesta* is theatrically more interesting than *The Master of Santiago*; indeed there are scenes of considerable excitement in its study of a full-blooded Renaissance lord fencing for power with a cunning and able Pope.

Malatesta, an outsize animal, has respect for nothing except beauty, and his plan to stab the Pope is completely in character. As Tamburlaine did, he suits Donald Wolfit, always prepared for a tremendous expenditure of nervous energy. Much of the performance is good, though at times Mr. Wolfit drives it a little far, when Malatesta becomes slightly a caricature, drawing laughs surely not intended by his austere author.

The play, at any rate in this production, alternates between melodrama and tense discussion. Alone with his fuming warlord, the Pope persuades him to throw away his dagger and accept his service. It is a notable verbal combat, subtle and fascinating, and so is the second act scene where Malatesta's wife, daring to discard formality, jockeys the Pope into relaxing her husband's humiliating near-imprisonment. In spite of his strangely mannered voice Ernest Milton makes a formidable papal figure, utterly ruthless and yet racked by his conflicting responsibilities as statesman and head of the church. Rosalind Idem comes well out of her long duel; if I had been married to Malatesta I should have gone to any extreme to keep him away from home. It is an uneven play, weakest in its heroics, but it reminds us vividly how even more uncomfortable life used to be.

The work of the usual collaborative platoon, *Damn Yankees* starts with a good idea, an elderly baseball fan selling his soul to the Devil in return for a season as the national hero who takes his second-rate team to the top of the league. Being a real-estate man and an adoring husband he has managed to insert an escape clause which will take him back to his little wife, left tearfully in a terrible parlour dwarfed to a doll's house by the vastness of the Coliseum. On his way out in the train of the Devil he lets rip with the most grisly song I have yet suffered from any American musical, entitled "Good-bye, Old Girl," and richly faithful to this sentiment. At their mushiest the songs in *Damn Yankees* seem to me appalling; at their best they are witless but delivered with heartening vitality, especially by the male chorus of baseball players. These simple oafs are rather charming, and one of them is taken by the only interesting actor of the evening, a large rubber-faced youth named Robin Hunter, quiet in method and very engaging. As a chorus and a muscular ballet they are extremely accurate and lusty; the production manages them much more skilfully than it does the gentler scenes, which show up badly when the well-known processes of the human heart are under review. This

department is complicated by a seductress introduced by the Devil and played by Belita so attractively that with more intelligent handling she might be very good; only here the element of satire on an absurd situation is missing.

Phil Vickers and Ivor Emmanuel cover the hero's two stages satisfactorily, Betty Paul deals bravely with his wife, and Bill Kerr is the Devil, a slick little salesman in red socks, persuasive but an unpromising candidate even for an eleven-plus in demonology. I doubt if the tunes will prove very adhesive. One has to wade through a sea of totally American allusion. But the vigour and the homely sugar seemed much to the taste of a first-night audience.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Waltz of the Toreadors (Criterion—14/3/56), adult and charming Anouilh. *Under Milk Wood* (New—28/8/56), a rich slice of Dylan Thomas. *Plaintiff in a Pretty Hat* (St. Martin's—24/10/56), very neat social comedy.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE BALLET

Petrushka (COVENT GARDEN)

EXPECTATION was running a shade too high when the Royal Ballet rekindled the high-light of Diaghilev's historic opening season in Paris in 1911. Old-stagers had slightly over-played their reminiscence of the wonder of Nijinsky's performance as the puppet Petrushka brought to a pathetic semblance of life by the magic wand of the Showman; and of the dazzling spectacle of the Butter Week Fair in St. Petersburg in which the drama of love, jealousy and death among the puppets is set.

None the less the present principals come well out of any comparison with their predecessors. In particular, Alexander Grant's performance in the title role was the outstanding achievement of a memorable evening, though there may be room for argument whether it reaches remembered poignancy of the sawdust doll who for a while has enough human understanding to experience elementary emotions of love and fear.

Margot Fonteyn was completely in the picture, in almost impenetrable make-up, as the ballerina puppet. Peter Clegg, excellent as the Blackamoor at play, was less convincing in the brutish ferocity which ends in the death of Petrushka. Frederick Ashton's impersonation of a Showman, not completely the master of his puppets, could not have been bettered.

The carnival scenes which open and close the ballet call for acting ability in every member of the company. It was evident that the Royal Ballet has not yet a leavening of mature performers who can give to balletic drama the solidity and



Sigismondo Malatesta—DONALD WOLFIT

[Malatesta]

realism it needs. For the original production of *Petrouchka* Alexander Benois, its joint author with Stravinsky, thought out every figure in the kaleidoscopic scene separately. If the revival falls short of his aim of realizing the manners and deportment of 1830 a good deal must be conceded to first-night nerves in young dancers called upon to be actors. They thronged the fairground charmingly in the costumes of the period, but that is not quite the same thing as vivid impersonation of individual men and women of every class of Russian metropolitan society.

Fokine's choreography, inspired by two separate works of Stravinsky, exactly fills its subordinate place in the lively story. It was fortunate that Serge Grigoriev and Liubov Tchernicheva, members of the original company, were available to supervise the revival and that M. Benois should touch up his original designs for dresses and scenery.

The air of authenticity was completed by the presence in the orchestra pit of Sir Malcolm Sargent who had conducted the work in Diaghilev days.

C. B. MORTLOCK

AT THE PICTURES



Their Secret Affair *A Man is Ten Feet Tall*

AMONG this week's four, no one was really distinguished enough to be an obvious first choice. The most professionally slick and, of its kind, the best is no doubt *Their Secret Affair* (Director: H. C. Potter); but this is easily recognizable as calculated hokum, the script of which (not a straightforward version of a John P. Marquand novel but merely "based on characters from" one) was probably written to order as a "vehicle" for two popular stars who have never been paired in a film before. It is axiomatic in the film world, at least in Hollywood, that you can make a box-office success by merely putting Miss X and Mr. Y together in some kind of story, any kind of story, so long as they are well-known personalities and the public has never hitherto seen them in the same film. Without knowing for certain, I would still bet that some such calculation was the basis of *Their Secret Affair*.

Susan Hayward appears as, of all things, a publisher: what the synopsis calls the "glamorous and hard-driving publisher" of a magazine on the lines of *Time* or *Newsweek*. Kirk Douglas, the other half of the equation, is a Major-General in the running for the position of head of an atomic-energy organization that she feels should be run by a civilian. She sets out, with her formidable equipment, to make him look such a fool that his chances will be spoiled, and we see her at it.

It goes without saying that before long they are in love, and she regrets what she has done to begin with; but it is too soon for the end of the film, and a further



[*Their Secret Affair*

DOTTIE PEALE—SUSAN HAYWARD

MAJOR-GENERAL MELVILLE GOODWIN—KIRK DOUGLAS

complication has to be arranged. The fact that he refuses to become involved because his one previous love affair ended badly and he is now "married to the Army" immediately sours her again, and by the time he has thought better of it, and wants to marry her after all, she has already published damaging stories about him. The film has now gone on long enough for the final reconciliation, which comes about by way of a Senate Committee inquiry.

You observe that I don't treat the thing very seriously; it is all artificial stuff, contrived for easy laughs. Nevertheless they are effective enough laughs at the time, and the piece is very entertaining in its trivial way. We aren't told whether Mr. Marquand approves of what has been done with his characters; possibly he takes as a compliment the implication that for real commercial success it was necessary for two Hollywood script-writers to imagine them in a story he didn't write.

The title of *A Man is Ten Feet Tall* (Director: Martin Ritt) is a reference to some of the homespun philosophy of the most memorable character in it, a big cheerful Negro stevedore excellently played by Sidney Poitier. He divides the human race into men and "lower forms": "Go with the men," he says, "and you're ten feet tall; go with the lower forms and you're down among the slime."

This advice he gives to the nominal hero of the piece, Axel (John Cassavetes), a young man with a "guilt complex" and a natural tendency to be ill-treated. Tommy the Negro takes him in hand

and by sheer friendliness and high spirits induces him to take a better view of life; they develop a high regard for each other which exacerbates the brutally unpleasant boss of the gang in which Axel works. At last there is a savage fight with loading hooks in which this universally hated man kills Tommy.

Reading beforehand about this, and how it was followed by a beating-up of the villain, I was not hopeful; but I found the whole thing unexpectedly attractive. The violent scenes are not dwelt on for the sake of the lip-lickers in the audience, and they do not set the tone of the picture. Mr. Cassavetes does well enough, but we have seen this sort of sullen chip-on-shoulder young man before; whereas Mr. Poitier's part, besides being a very likeable character anyway, is a quite fresh individual.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Another new one in London is *Time Without Pity*, a rather strained melodrama (with some good incidental scenes) about the efforts of a father (Michael Redgrave) to prove in time the innocence of his son condemned for murder. *Fortune is a Woman* (27/3/57) and *Anastasia* (6/3/57), have another day to run; *La Traversée de Paris* (27/2/57), *Lust for Life* (20/3/57), and *Doctor at Large* (20/3/57) continue.

The two most interesting new releases were reviewed here together (13/3/57): *Brothers in Law*, string of amusing character-sketches, and *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* with John Gielgud as the domestic tyrant.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

Do-It-Yourself

THE B.B.C. - *News Chronicle* programme "Be Your Own Boss" is now in its final stages, and something like thirty per cent of the viewing public (according to the pollsters) must be as interested as I am to know which of the six finalists will pull down the prize of £3,500.

This competition makes excellent television. Very wisely the sponsors and the producer, Charles Farmer, have mounted the programme without reference to the big-and-brassy give-away shows made popular by the I.T.A. There is no wise-cracking compère, there are no elaborate props or gimmicks: the candidates (not competitors, mark you) are confronted by a knowledgeable and perceptive quartet of examiners, and the examination is conducted with uncommon intelligence and dignity.

Some viewers, I have no doubt, consider the proceedings slow and dull. No sound-proof kiosks, no sealed envelopes, no buried treasure. No clearly-marked and predictable crescendos of joy, disappointment and embarrassment. And no phrenetic, acquisitive gleam in the eyes of the contestants. That "Be Your Own Boss" should appear forbiddingly cerebral to devotees of "Double Your Money," "Take Your Pick" and "The 64,000 Question" is a natural and disastrous consequence of TV's twin-channelled over-indulgence in slush and shoddy.

The teen-agers' Saturday party "Six-Five Special" must be costing the B.B.C. a pretty penny. Every week Jo Douglas and Pete Murray roll back the carpet for a remarkable gang of hep-cats and



LONNIE DONEGAN FREDDIE MILLS JO DOUGLAS

shooting stars, a team of all the currently popular and presumably expensive talents. A week or so ago the gallimaufry included Tommy Steele, Jill Day, Lonnie Donegan, Humphrey Lyttelton, Freddie Mills and Sylvia Sims, and to put it mildly a good time was had by all.

I am, alas, no teen-ager, so I am not qualified to pass judgment on the "Six-Five Special's" *modus vivendi*; but because a number of correspondents have already chided me for this column's aloof attitude to the session I have resolved to risk my neck with a few middle-aged reflections. Very well then.

Of Master Tommy Steele and his Steelmen I can say that they have mastered the rudiments of rhythm, that they sing and jitter like American Dervishes and remain unfailingly cheerful in spite of their chores at the belt-conveyor of rock 'n' roll. Steele himself is a good showman. He wears his beach shirts and drain-pipes with becoming

immodesty and sings and yells with immense energy. He also wins a good mark for introducing a song, "Cumberland Gap," that puts Britain—instead of the Middle West—on the Tin Pan Alley map.

Lonnie Donegan is another high-spirited performer. He leads a string band (or as the aficionado would say, a Skiffle Group), sings in the aggressive, snarling, yelping tones of a cornered jungle animal, and occasionally tries his hand, unsuccessfully, at wisecracks.

Jill Day croons melodiously and confidently. Her series of programmes called "The Jill Day Show" (scripted by Jill Day) has been disappointing, but out on her own she is a highly competent, though obviously synthetic, bundle of glamour. She would do well

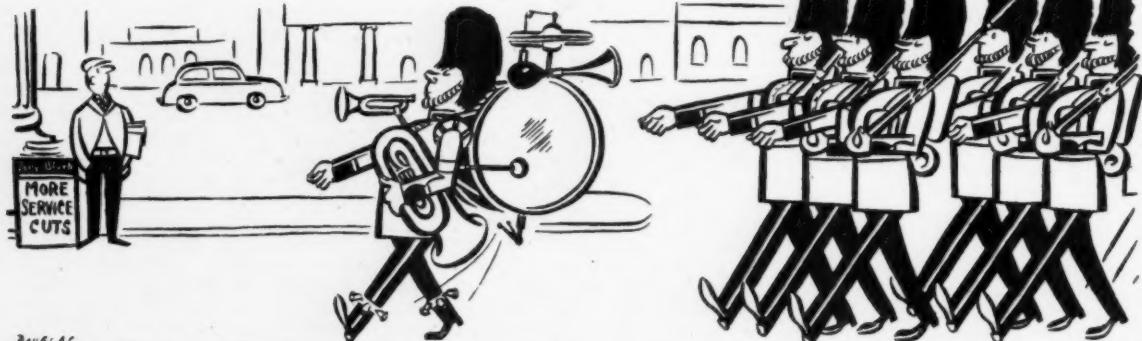
in musical comedy, preferably in a British show that has no interest in real jazz.

Freddie Mills is okay. So is Humphrey Lyttelton, though I am sorry to see him confining so much of his talent to the repetitious groove of "The Saints" and "Bad Penny Blues."

The real stars of the show, however, are the rocking, rolling, clapping, screaming gaggle of teen-age cats. I can watch their antics with intense interest and no little awe. Sometimes I find myself envying their delirious enjoyment of our crude modern popular rhythms, but more often they remind me of my good fortune in being introduced to jazz in the palmy days of Armstrong, Spanier, Manone, Berigan, Ellington and company.

The programme is produced very ably by Jo Douglas and Jack Good, and there is something called "additional research"—the product of which escapes me—by Kenneth Midwood.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



Douglas.

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